

London, February 13, 1757.

PROPOSALS

For Printing, in Monthly Numbers,

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Samuel

THE

HISTORY

OF THE

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POPPES,

*FROM St. PETER, TO BENEDICT XIII.
INCLUSIVELY.*

Translated from the FRENCH.

With additional Notes and Observations by the TRANSLATOR.



L O N D O N:

Printed for JOHN WHISTON and BENJAMIN WHITE in Fleet-street;
JOHN RIVINGTON in St. Paul's Church-yard; and
W. PAYNE, near the Menfe Gate.

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For Printing in Monthly Numbers

LIST FOR

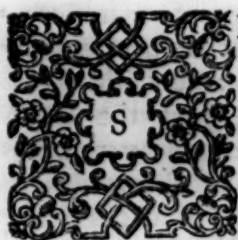
THE P. E. S.





T O

The P U B L I C.



SENSIBLE as the Translator of this Work may be, that any recommendation of it, from himself, will come before You with an ill grace, yet he thinks it is incumbent on him to give a short Account of the Nature and Design of it.

First then, it exhibits a compleat view of the Lives and Actions of the Popes in their Temporal, as well as Ecclesiastical, capacities; and consequently becomes a history of the Court, as well as of the Church, of Rome; the History of a considerable country, but of a much more considerable series of Princes. It accurately describes the rise of their spiritual authority, and the acquisition of their temporal power; it displays their policy in conducting the one, and their craft in managing the other; exquisite in both! And we dare venture to affirm, that, such as have any taste for History; — any inclination to understand the general state of Europe for many Centuries past; — or any desire to conceive a perfect idea of the public transactions, the political interests or intrigues, of the several powers in Christendom, at any one period since the Pontificate of Gregory VII. will not find their time misemployed in perusing it.

Secondly, if we consider this Work in the light of an Ecclesiastical History, we shall find it various and comprehensive, concise and impartial. The Pontificates in the dark ages of Christianity, which, from the barrenness of events that have come to our knowledge, are generally as well the driest subjects for an Author, as the most uninteresting

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ing to a Reader, are here treated of, though very briefly, in the only manner that can render them instructive: Many works supposed to have been the produce of those times, are proved to be spurious, by evident marks of forgery; others are assigned to their real authors, by the just rules of Criticism and History; and immense heaps of learned rubbish are removed out of the way, that those who are disposed to acquire a competent knowledge of Ecclesiastical History, may neither be diverted nor discouraged in their pursuit of it, but will be directed and facilitated in this branch of learning, by impartial characters of the several writers, who have treated of it, and critical observations upon their works. These volumes contain a succinct account of all the Councils, of the most eminent Saints, Fathers, &c. of the rise, progress and fate, of every sect and doctrine that has embroiled the Church, and of every custom and ceremony that have disguised it. They trace error to its source, penetrate into the dark recesses of fraud, and reveal the solemn mysteries of superstition and imposture. They shew us the primitive professors of Christianity procuring respect to themselves, and converts to their Religion, by the purity of their doctrine, the simplicity of their manners, and the sanctity of their lives, opposing patience and humility to power and persecution, with superiority and success; but they shew us too, how their successors have impiously perverted the purest institutions to serve the purposes of ambition, avarice, and cruelty; to oppress the liberties, and engross the properties of mankind; and how they have found means to aggravate the guilt of persecution itself, by directing it against their own brethren of the same faith.

As to the Popes in particular, our Author shews, I. That the Universal Jurisdiction, which they lay claim to, is absolutely refuted by authentic facts. II. That their power over the Temporalities of Princes, is a most iniquitous usurpation. III. That their Infallibility is chimerical. IV. That the faithful are not obliged to pay an implicit obedience to the Popes. V. That the Popes are subject to Councils; and VI. That they did not formerly interfere in the affairs of other Bishops, over whom they had no authority whatsoever.

As to the manner, in which our Author has executed his plan, we will present the Reader with a literal translation of an authority, extracted from the *Bibliothèque Française* †, which is as follows.

“ A good History of the Popes has long been wished for; but so difficult an undertaking has never yet been executed in such a manner, as to become satisfactory to the Public. Some historians have treated the Popes too favourably, or, through an excess of flattery, have commended actions the most reprehensible, have passed wicked men, at least such as are void of all Christian and moral virtues, for Saints, and have undertaken to justify the chimerical pretensions of the Tramon-
tanes, by ascribing to the Pontiffs of Rome a power and authority, which they never received from Jesus Christ, whose Vicars they stile

† Vol. XVII. Part II. Art. 1.

“ themselves

“ themselves. Others have only studied, to blacken the Popes, and lash
 “ them with satire, unjustly confounding the good with the bad. The
 “ laws of History prohibit such extremes on either side ; its object is to re-
 “ present men such as they were, and fidelity is, without doubt, the great
 “ rule which a writer should propose to himself. The historian, who has
 “ lately given us Two Volumes of the Lives of the Popes *, appears to
 “ us equally valuable for the learned disquisitions he has made to come
 “ at truth, and his sincerity in relating it.” [There follow near seventy
 pages, containing a very nice criticism upon the two first volumes, which
 concludes thus ;] “ What we have been saying is sufficient to give a fa-
 “ vourable idea of *The History of the Popes*, and of the character of the
 “ Author. It is so rare a thing to meet with truth in works of this kind,
 “ the writers of which are generally influenced by a spirit of party, that
 “ the Public ought to rejoice at finding it in a history, where sincerity is
 “ no less conspicuous than erudition, and the propriety of the re-
 “ flections”. — After producing a testimony of such weight, we shall
 only take notice, that no facts are advanced throughout this Work, but on
 the best authorities, which are always referred to.

It still remains for the Translator to give some account of his own un-
 dertaking. — His motives for it were, the advice of men of judgment,
 and the utility he imagined might accrue to his country, by rendering this
 Work familiar to his countrymen ; as he presumed it might prove the
 means of securing many from falling into the errors of Popery, that may
 be induced, not to say allured, to read a history interspersed with curious
 anecdotes, and just reflections ; who would not easily be persuaded, per-
 haps not thoroughly qualified, to follow several of our great authors, thro’
 a concatenation of fine arguments : — As he thought it might be of great
 use to many of the Romish Communion, who are seldom disposed to rea-
 son on the subject of their Religion, otherwise than from authorities ; and
 it cannot be doubted but that many of them will have the candour, as
 well as the easy opportunity, of looking into the discipline and institu-
 tions of their Church, as set forth, not only by Protestants, but by the
 ablest writers of their own side. He hoped likewise, that it would not
 prove unedifying, or unentertaining, to the more learned, whether in Ec-
 clestiafical or General History ; especially as there is not a compleat, or
 even tolerable one of the kind besides this ; which, as being the best history
 of an European State, must be allowed to be a capital performance, and
 a very interesting one, when we consider what that State is. — And one
 great utility he proposed was, that of introducing our students in Divinity
 to a readier and more familiar acquaintance with this kind of history,
 which, from the intricacy of the subject, as well as the prolixity or par-
 tiality of the writers, could not be obtained without a great expence of time
 and study, and has been often attempted with a considerable waste of both.

* Meaning the Two first Volumes of this Work ; which were published at the Hague
 in the year 1732.

As to the Translation, he has endeavoured to give it the air of an Original, whilst he has observed the strictest fidelity to his Author. He believes he has sufficient knowledge of the language, not to mistake the sense of it: He is sure he has honesty enough not to pervert it. In short, he has spared neither time nor care to make the author speak as he thought, that is, like a good Englishman.

The references he has collated, and, where necessary, corrected.

The notes, which he has added, are distinguished by asterisks. He has not industriously sought occasions of multiplying them: sometimes they seemed necessary by way of illustration, or criticism. They consist of short extracts from the most approved writers, and such concise reasonings as appeared to be apposite; and it is hoped, upon the whole, are such as will not sink the value of the Translation below that of the Original.

Thus much he thought necessary, in order to give some idea of the Work; but the merits of it must be determined from the performance itself, which will shortly be submitted to the Public, in that confidence, which always attends the consciousness of an attempt to serve them; and that satisfaction, which must accompany every act, that is calculated to advance Truth, and promote useful Knowledge.

P O S T S C R I P T.

The Translator was upon the point of sending the foregoing to the Press, when it was strongly insisted on, that some notice must be taken of the Author; which indeed had been done in its proper place, but that, out of respect to the Public, he was determined to be silent on that head, till he should be in possession of such authentic vouchers, as he has assurances of receiving from abroad. However, it was not thought proper to defer the publication of so useful a Work, as the present is, for want of such lights, as had not the least tendency to improve the mind or morals of the Reader, but were merely matters of curiosity. The Translator therefore, for the present, will only observe, that the Author evidently appears to have been a Jansenist, from pag. 166. Vol. I. where he takes particular care to let us know, that, notwithstanding his animadversions upon the treatise *de Naturâ & Gratiâ*, which he calls the buckler of Jansenism, he is not the less a Jansenist, but one, from different principles than what are therein contained. We will produce the passage, because it has been so strangely mistaken, as to occasion conclusions to be drawn directly contrary to the sense of it. "Those who may be surprised to hear me talk at this rate, and who know that the world does me the honour to reckon me a Jansenist, will cease to wonder when they shall find, in the life of Clement XI. that if I reject the Bull *Unigenitus*, if I look upon it with horror and indignation, it is for very different reasons from those, that have been hitherto assigned." Notwithstanding this, and that the singular number is made use of throughout the Work, (as is common in

many that are the joint produce of several hands,) we agree in the general opinion, and by far the most prevailing one abroad, that this was compiled by a *society of the Jansenists* in France, who industriously concealed their names, lest they might become obnoxious to the merciless hand of Ecclesiastical power, in that country. These Gentlemen, actuated solely by a zeal for the cause of Religion, and the service of mankind, would not suffer this their anonymous offspring to perish, because, for that reason, they could derive no credit from it, but possibly might, as is commonly imagined, entrust the care of it's production to one Mr. Brueys, who at that time resided at the Hague; and from hence a notion very naturally took its rise, that he was not only the Editor of the Work, but likewise the Author, as no other person *appeared* to have any concern in it.

The reasons that have induced some Jesuits in France to propagate this opinion, may easily be guessed; they found it not for their interest to meddle with the Work itself; it was fraught with stubborn truths; it abounded with authorities, to which they had often appealed; their own arms were turned against them; Mr. Brueys was dead, and could not answer for himself, the real authors dared not: his character therefore was first to be traduced, and then he was to be set up for the Author; and by the help of a small jesuitical inversion of common sense, we were to condemn the Work upon account of the Author, that is, to judge of the fruit by the tree.

Though the Translator is not yet able to name, with certainty, the very persons to whom the world is indebted for this History, he thinks it cannot be with justice ascribed to Mr. Brueys, who was born in the year 1708, and the Work appeared compleat in 1734. when, consequently, he was but twenty-six years old; an age, at which it can hardly be imagined he could have amassed such a variety of knowledge, digested it so maturely, and reduced it into so clear and regular a system; much less still, if we consider his dissipations, and avocations from pursuing the necessary studies for such a task, for he set out upon his travels in 1727. (being in his 19th year,) to Geneva first, and afterwards to Holland, where he was employed upon a periodical work, under the title of *Critique désintéressée des Journaux Littéraires, et des Ouvrages des Sçavans*, published at the Hague in 1730: in which year he was also in London, and the impression of this History was begun before April 1731. What makes it still clearer, that Brueys was not the Author of this Work, is a passage in the Work itself (Vol. I. p. 224. of the original, and in the beginning of our third Number) where he himself is taken notice of, at the end of an observation upon the intemperate zeal of new converts, in these words, *viz.* "The conduct of Brueys, and Pelisson, justifies what I advance, and it would be to no purpose to produce farther proofs of it."

C O N D I T I O N S.

I. **T**HIS Work will be printed on the same Letter and Paper as these Proposals; and the whole will be comprized in Five Volumes Quarto; as in the Original.

II. Each Volume will make about Six Numbers, one of which containing Thirteen Sheets sewed in blue Paper, will be published every Month at the Price of Two Shillings and Six-pence.

III. The first Number will be published on the Twenty-fifth of March next, and the succeeding Numbers will be continued regularly, until the whole is finished.

IV. That the Public may be assured this Work will not exceed what is proposed, the Contents of each Volume are here specified:

Vol. I.	}	Begins with	{	ST. PETER,	}	And ends with	{	LEO III. C. Pope - - - A. D. 816.
II.				STEPHEN V.				LUCIUS II. CLXXII. Pope - - - 1145.
III.				EUGENE III.				ALEXANDER V. CCXII. Pope - 1410.
IV.				JOHN XXIII.				PIUS IV. CCXXXIII. Pope - - 1565.
V.				PIUS V.				BENEDICT XIII. CCLIV. Pope 1730.

V. Such Persons as are inclined to encourage this Work, are desired to send in their Names and Places of Abode, to either of the Booksellers mentioned in the Title, and the Numbers will be regularly left at their Houses as soon as they are published.

N. B. The Title Page, with a beautiful Engraving by Mr. *Ravenet*, will be delivered with the last Number of the First Volume.

